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New Jersey
Department of
Environmental Protection
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Jim Florio, Governor
Judith A. Yucklin, Commissioner



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DEP AWARDS MERCURY CLEANUP CONTRACT FOR THE WOOD-RIDGE SITES

TRENTON--State Environmental Commissioner Judith Yucklin announced today that a \$526,000 contract to remove and dispose of mercury contaminated soil from two properties in Wood-Ridge, Bergen County, has been awarded to A and R Contractors of Jackson.

"The proposed work at the two residential properties and one publicly owned tract contaminated with mercury in Wood-Ridge represents a continuing effort by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to control the offsite impacts of National Priority List (NPL-Superfund) sites on surrounding areas," Commissioner Yucklin said.

Yucklin noted that the DEP has determined that the mercury contamination found at the two properties is unacceptable to the Hackensack River Basin which is located south of the affected area.

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John J. Trola, Assistant Commissioner for Hazardous Waste Management, said the contract awarded to A and R calls for the excavation of the mercury contaminated soil, replacement of the removed soil with clean fill, replacing the vegetative cover and general restoration of the disturbed areas to their original condition.

"The site work and restoration is expected to be completed within 90 days of the start date," Trola said. The excavated contaminated soils will be transported to the Bergen County Solid Waste Transfer Station for proper disposal, he added.

According to DEP Division of Hazardous Site Mitigation Director Anthony J. Farro, elevated levels of mercury detected at the Barry's Creek Superfund site prompted the DEP to expand sampling efforts into nearby residential neighborhoods. "The expanded mapping program revealed a total of nine residential properties with mercury contaminated soil in excess of 14 parts per million (ppm)," Farro said.

Farro added that cleanup costs for the ten properties will be initially financed through the use of the state Spill Fund, which is financed through a tax levied on the petroleum and chemical industries in the state. The DEP will be looking to recover the cleanup costs from Morton International, Inc., and Valdecol Chemical Corporation, currently identified as responsible parties for the mercury contamination problem.

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